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The **UNEXPECTED**



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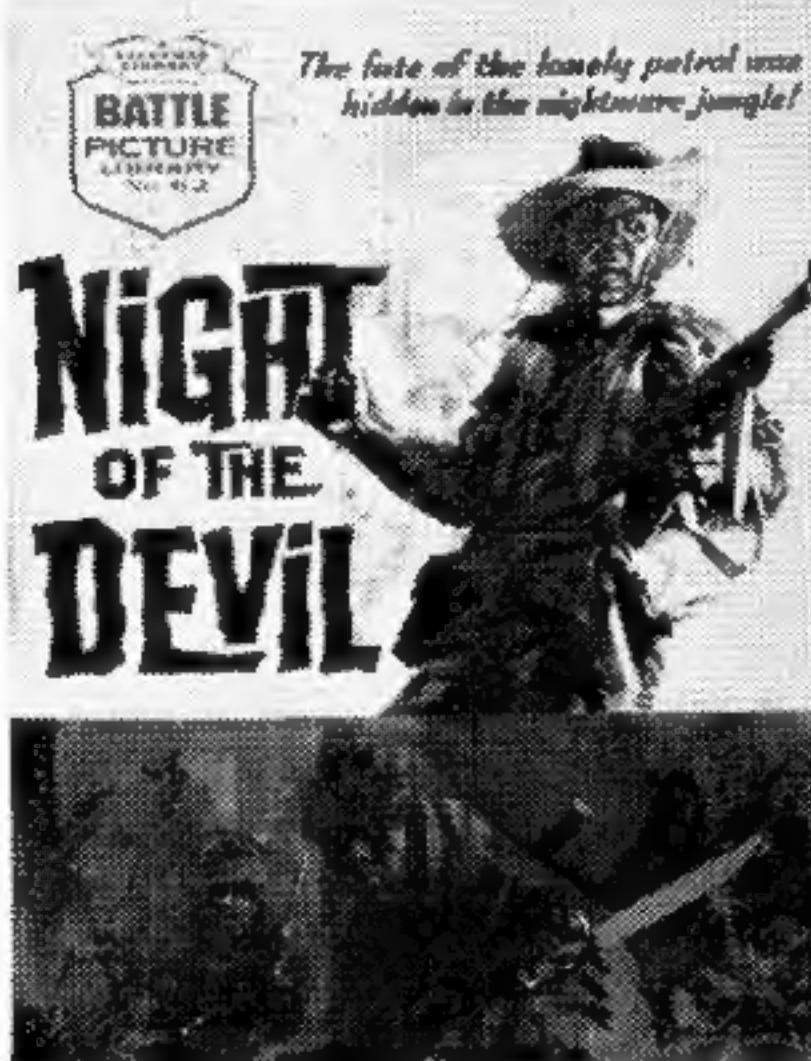
- ★ No. 61 **DEATH TRAP**
Like a monstrous god of war, Hill 60 demanded a sacrifice!
- ★ No. 62 **NIGHT OF THE DEVIL**
The fate of the lonely patrol was hidden in the nightmare jungle!
- ★ No. 63 **CHALLENGE**
The war was too far away for these red-blooded men of action!
- ★ No. 64 **THE VICIOUS CIRCLE**
Clawed from the sky, they would not admit defeat!

BATTLE PICTURE LIBRARY

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THE UNEXPECTED

THE SPECTACULAR SUCCESS OF SPECIAL MISSIONS IN THE SECOND WORLD WAR WAS FIRST AND FOREMOST THE RESULT OF THE COURAGE AND ENTERPRISE OF THE MEN TAKING PART. BUT ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS IN THE SUCCESS OF SUCH MISSIONS WAS THE CAREFUL PLANNING AND MINUTE CHECKING THAT HAD BECOME THE CHIEF FUNCTION OF BRITISH ARMY INTELLIGENCE . . .



THIS EFFICIENT SYSTEM OF SIFTING FACTS HAD BEEN THE RESPONSIBILITY OF ONE MAN — COLONEL HENRY BRAYBROOKE. DURING THE EARLY STAGES OF THE LIBYAN CAMPAIGN, HE HAD LEARNED THE VALUE OF DETAIL FROM ONE OF THE COMMANDOS MOST DANGEROUS ASSIGNMENTS — OPERATION TASKMASTER!

Chapter 1. Back from the Dead

EARLY IN 1941, THE ALLIED FORCES WERE FALLING BACK UNDER THE OVERWHELMING MIGHT OF ROMMEL'S PANZERS. THROUGH THE DUSTY STREETS OF CAIRO, A BRITISH ARMY LORRY GROUNDED ITS WAY—UNTIL IT REACHED AN UNOSTRUSIVE WHITEWASHED GATEWAY... THE HEADQUARTERS OF ARMY INTELLIGENCE.



CAPTAIN PHILIP STANTON WAS TAKEN STRAIGHT TO THE OFFICE OF COLONEL BRAYBROOKE.

PLEASE GO STRAIGHT IN, SIR. THE COLONEL IS WAITING FOR YOU!

THANK YOU, LIEUTENANT!



The Unexpected

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COLONEL BRAYBROOKE HAD THE INSCRUTABLE FEATURES OF A MAN WHOSE EXPRESSIONS NEVER REVEALED HIS THOUGHTS. HE SPOKE IN SHORT, CLIPPED, DIRECT SENTENCES THAT CUT SHORT ANY ARGUMENT.

CAPTAIN STANTON REPORTING, SIR.

I HAVE YOUR REPORT, CAPTAIN. SOME POINTS NEED FURTHER EXPLANATION. SIT DOWN AND GIVE ME THE FULL STORY...



A LITTLE TAKEN ABACK BY THE COLONEL'S ABRUPT ATTITUDE, THE CAPTAIN SAT WARILY IN THE CHAIR AND SEARCHED BACK THROUGH HIS MEMORY...

YOUR REGIMENT WAS OVERRUN WHILE HOLDING THE LINE TWELVE MILES EAST OF GAZALA AERODROME! TAKE IT FROM THERE...

WELL, SIR - AFTER I ESCAPED I ...



The Unexpected

AND SO THE CAPTAIN TOOK UP THE STORY OF THE GRUELING ACTION IN WHICH A CRACK REGIMENT HAD BEEN WIPE OUT IN AN ATTEMPT TO CHECK THE FLOW OF ROMMEL'S ARMOUR TOWARDS TOBRUK .

I WAS 'B' COMPANY COMMANDER, IN A FORWARD SECTOR OF THE LINE. OUR CASUALTIES HAD BEEN HEAVY AND WE WERE RUNNING LOW ON AMMUNITION WHEN THE GERMAN TANKS HIT US . . .



THE SITUATION WAS TENSE . AFTER CHASING THE ITALIANS BACK ACROSS THE DESERT, THE WEARY BRITISH ARMY HAD RUN INTO THE WALL OF ROMMEL'S HEAVILY MECHANISED FORCES .

HERE THEY COME AGAIN,
SERGEANT! HOLD THEM OFF
AT ALL COSTS!

WE'RE
RUNNING SHORT
OF AMMO, SIR -
I'VE JUST ISSUED
THE LAST OF
OUR RESERVES!



The Unexpected

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ACROSS THE BURNING SANDS CAME
THE THICKLY ARMoured MONSTERS
OF ROMMEL'S PANZERS — THE
MARK IV TANKS . . .



UNDER-STRENGTH AND SHORT OF
AMMUNITION, THE BRITISH WERE
HARD-PUSHED, BUT DOGGEDLY
HELD THEIR GROUND.

YOU'VE ABOUT THREE
MAGS LEFT, DUSTY—
AND THAT'S ALL!

WE CAN'T
HANG ON MUCH
LONGER. THERE
SEEMS TO BE NO
END TO THESE
JERRIES!



The Unexpected

THEIR HEAVY STEEL GIVING THEM FULL PROTECTION AGAINST ANYTHING THE BRITISH HAD LEFT TO THROW AT THEM, THE MARK IV PANZERS RUMBLED TOWARDS THEIR LINES, GUNS SPRAYING A MURDEROUS STREAM OF LEAD .

LET THE TANKS GO THROUGH! YOU CAN'T STOP THEM! SAVE YOUR AMMO FOR THE INFANTRY .



IN THE WAKE OF THE TANKS, WAVE AFTER WAVE OF TOUGH AFRIKA KORPS TROOPS SWEPT DOWN ON THE WEAKENED DEFENDERS.

COME ON, LADS!
FIX BAYONETS!

THAT'S YOUR LAST MAG, DUSTY! FROM NOW ON IT'S COLD STEEL!



The Unexpected

7

BUT DETERMINATION AND COURAGE WERE NOT ENOUGH! THE BRITISH WERE SWAMPED UNDER SHEER WEIGHT OF NUMBERS. STANTON GRABBED AT THE BLADE OF A GERMAN BAYONET TO AVOID ITS MURDEROUS THRUST.

NO YOU DON'T, FRITZ - YOU WON'T GET ME THAT EASY!

AAAGH!



BUT THE OFFICER WAS NOT PREPARED FOR THE SWING OF THE HEAVY BUTT, AS THE RIFLE PIVOTED IN THE GERMAN'S HANDS . . .

TAKE THAT ENGLANDER!

AAAGH!



The Unexpected

COLONEL BRAYBROOKE
EASED HIMSELF MORE
COMFORTABLY INTO HIS
CHAIR AS STANTON
CONTINUED . . .

HOW LONG I WAS UNCONSCIOUS
I HAVE NO IDEA - BUT WHEN
I EVENTUALLY CAME ROUND THE
FIGHT WAS OVER . . .

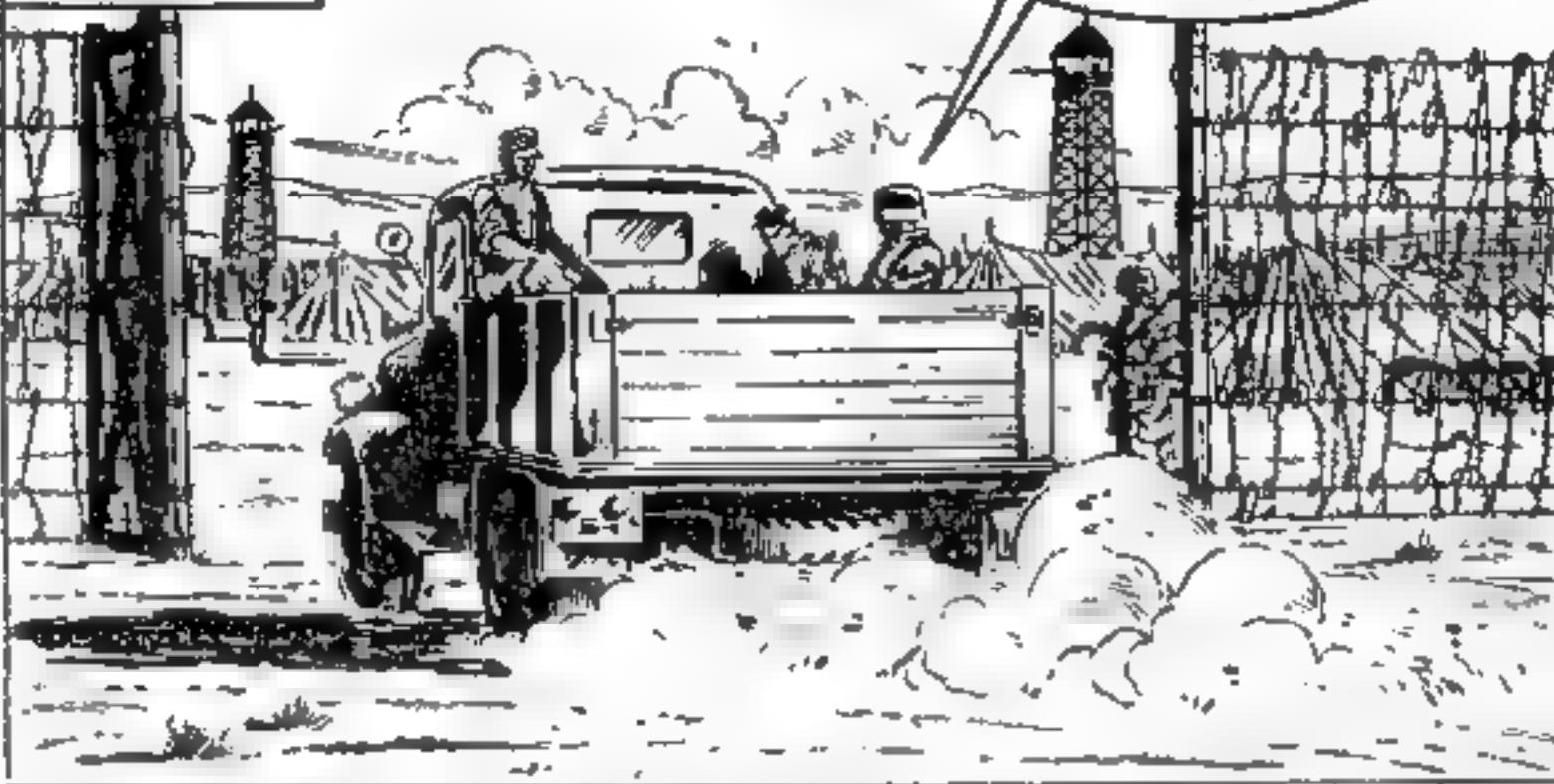


The Unexpected

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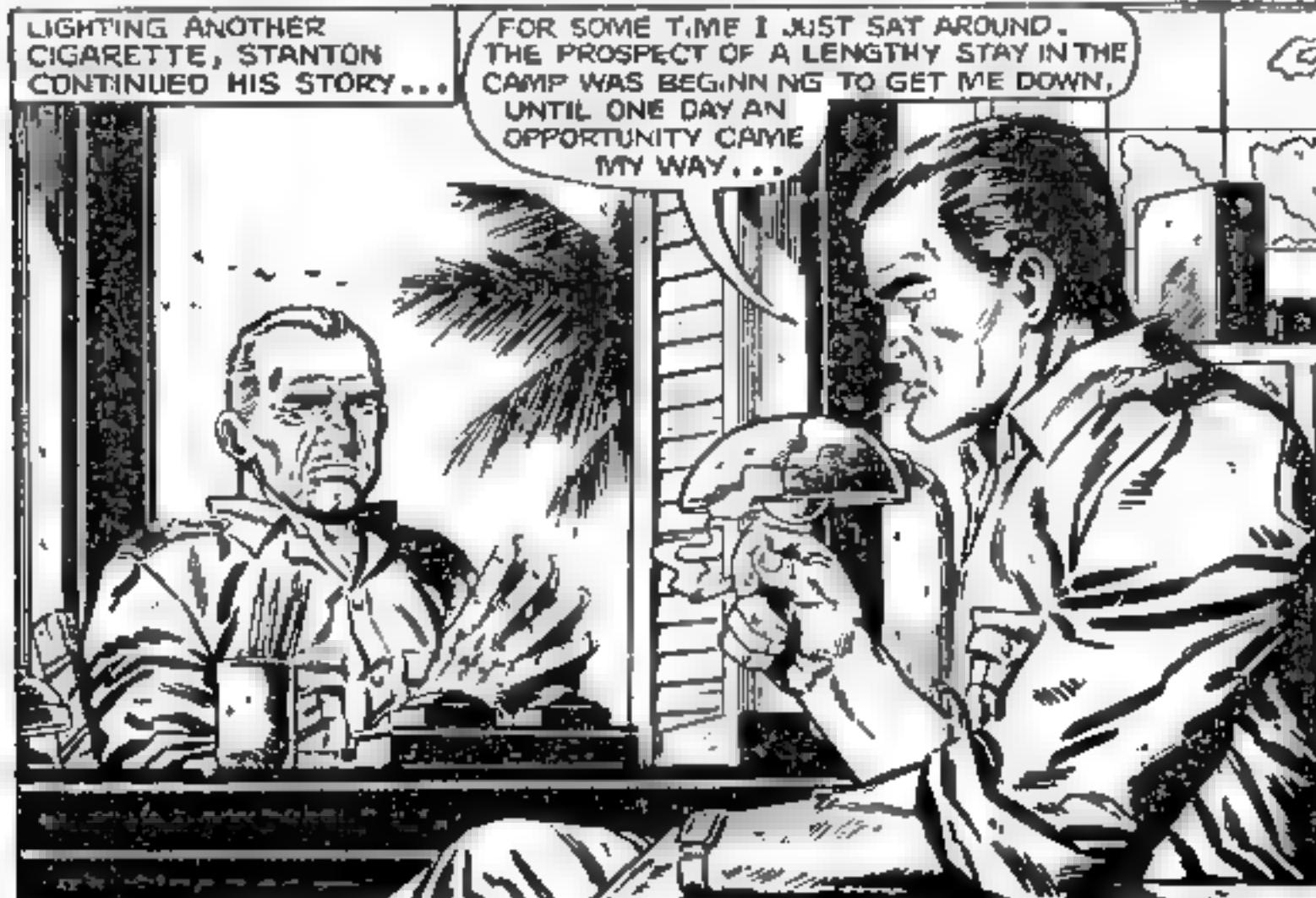
AN HOUR LATER, STANTON SAT MISERABLY IN THE BACK OF A LURCHING GERMAN LORRY AS IT SWUNG THROUGH THE GATES OF THE PRISON COMPOUND . . .

THINK YOURSELF FORTUNATE, ENGLANDER FOR YOU THE WAR IS OVER!



LIGHTING ANOTHER CIGARETTE, STANTON CONTINUED HIS STORY . . .

FOR SOME TIME I JUST SAT AROUND. THE PROSPECT OF A LENGTHY STAY IN THE CAMP WAS BEGINNING TO GET ME DOWN, UNTIL ONE DAY AN OPPORTUNITY CAME MY WAY . . .



The Unexpected

FROM HIS TENT, STANTON WATCHED AS THE ARAB REFUSE COLLECTOR WAS GRUDGINGLY ADMITTED TO THE GERMAN CAMP.

IT'S ONLY THAT OLD FOOL ACHMED, KURT! YOU'D BETTER GO WITH HIM TO THE MESSING TENT!



STANTON KEPT UP HIS VIGIL AS THE WIZENED OLD ARAB SHUFFLED BACK AND FORTH WITH THE KITCHEN GARBAGE. THE GERMAN GUARD PAID NO ATTENTION . . .

THAT OLD ROGUE DOESN'T NEED WATCHING! I COULD HAVE A QUICK SMOKE BEFORE HE'S FINISHED!



The Unexpected

41

SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE BLUE SKY, FURTIVE WISPS OF SMOKE CURLED UP INTO THE STILL AIR FROM THE SENTRY'S CIGARETTE ...

HAVING A CRAFTY FAG, EH? THIS IS THE CHANCE I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR ...

NO-ONE NOTICED AS STANTON CREEPT STEALTHILY ROUND BEHIND THE GUARD. THEN ...



SAUNTERING UP TO THE WAITING CART WITH A DECEPTIVE AIR OF CASUALNESS, STANTON CAST A QUICK LOOK ROUND—THEN LEAPT ON TO THE CART AND SLID DOWN IN BETWEEN THE SWILL-BINS!

I WILL BE HERE AGAIN TOMORROW, EFFENDI.

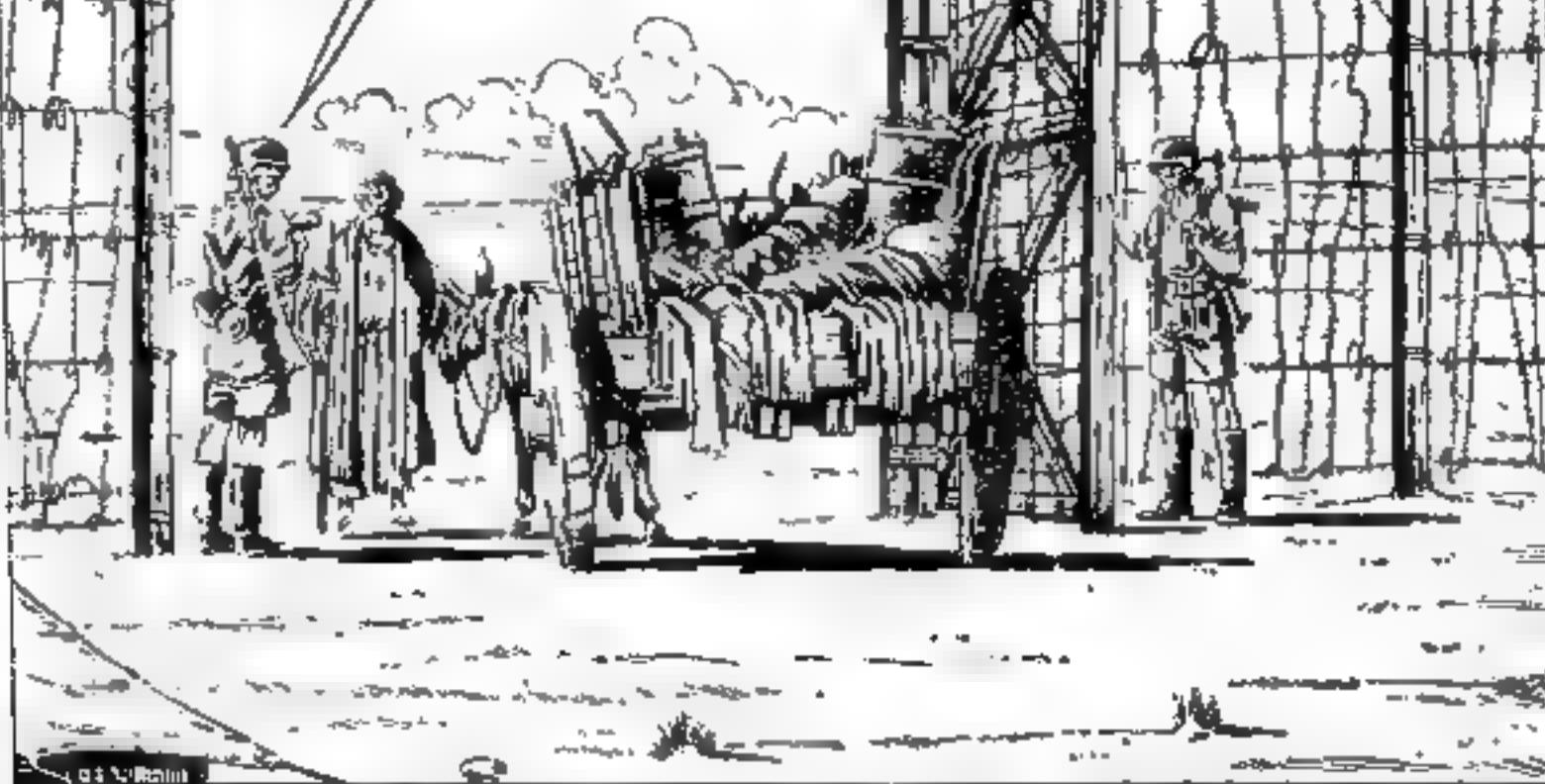
ALL RIGHT,
OLD MAN! ON
YOUR WAY!



The Unexpected

SLOWLY, THE SMELLY CART RUMBLED TO THE GATE. EVERY MUSCLE TENSE, STANTON HELD HIS BREATH, EXPECTING AT ANY MOMENT TO FEEL THE MUZZLE OF A RIFLE PRODDING HIS BACK . . .

PHEW! CLEAR OFF WITH YOUR STINKING LOAD OF RUBBISH, YOU MISERABLE BAG-OF-BONES!



WITH A HEFTY SLAP ON THE DONKEY'S RUMP, THE GUARD STOOD TO ONE SIDE AS THE CART RUMBLED SLOWLY FORWARD AGAIN . . .

GOADED TO GREATER EFFORT BY THE ARAB'S STAFF, THE UNWILLING ANIMAL TROTTED FORWARD DOWN THE TRACK.



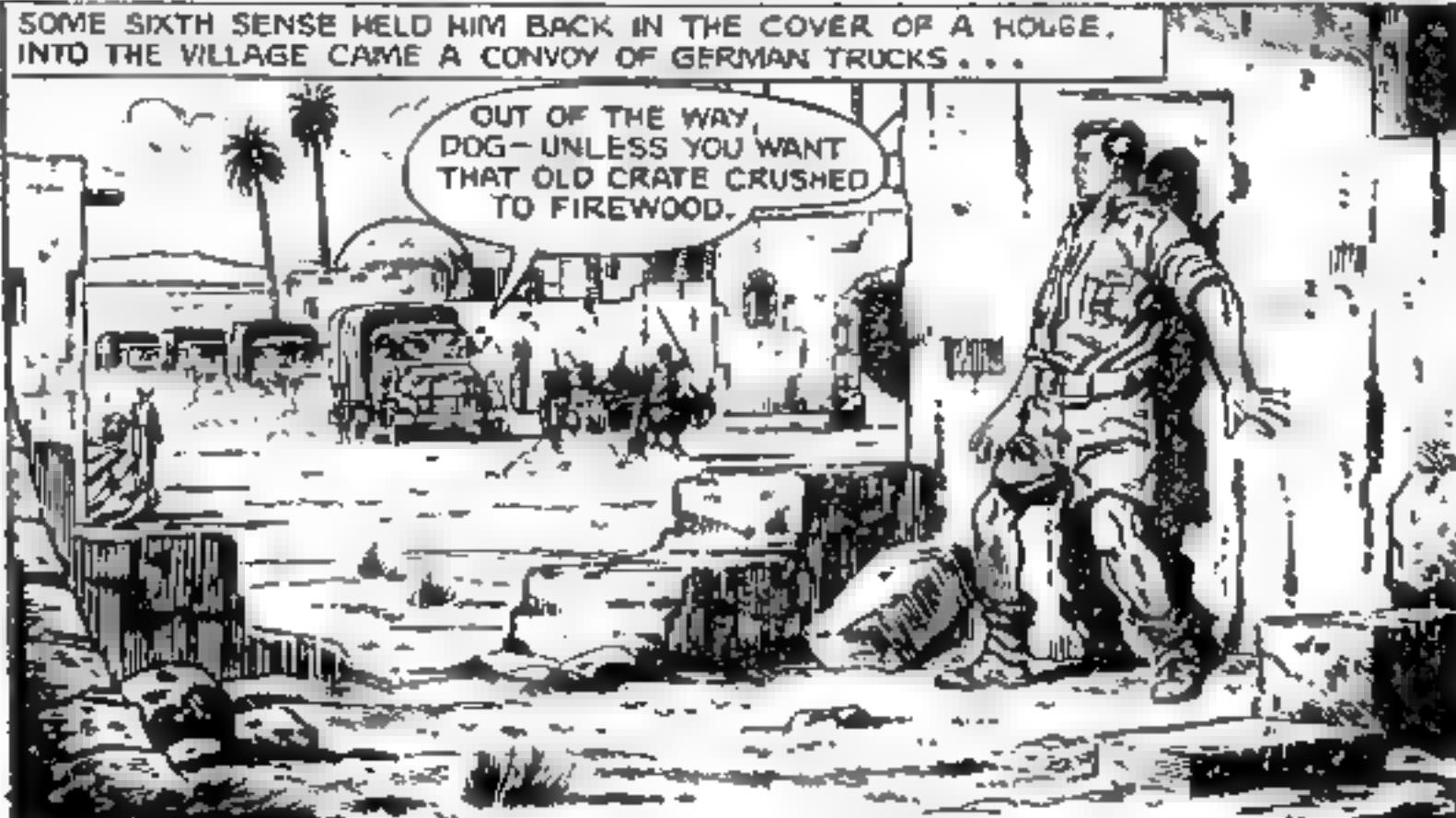
THE CART PULLED INTO AN ARAB VILLAGE. IN A FLASH, STANTON HAD LEAPT FROM HIS HIDING PLACE . . .

I MUST GET AWAY FROM HERE BEFORE THEY SEND OUT SEARCH-PARTIES . . .



SOME SIXTH SENSE HELD HIM BACK IN THE COVER OF A HOUSE. INTO THE VILLAGE CAME A CONVOY OF GERMAN TRUCKS . . .

OUT OF THE WAY, DOG—UNLESS YOU WANT THAT OLD CRATE CRUSHED TO FIREWOOD.



The Unexpected

THE LAST LORRY DREW LEVEL WITH STANTON. ON THE SPUR OF THE MOMENT, HE RAN TO CATCH UP WITH THE VEHICLE . . .

THEY'RE PRETTY CERTAIN TO BE GOING TO THE FRONT LINE. I'LL TAKE A LIFT WITH THEM . . .



AS THEY NEARED THE FRONT LINE, THE CONVOY GROUND TO A HALT AT A MILITARY CHECK-POINT. WITH TYPICAL GERMAN THOROUGHNESS, THE OFFICER IN CHARGE INSISTED ON EXAMINING EVERY TRUCK . . .

RATIONS, AMMUNITION AND STORES FOR THE SEVENTH ARTILLERY, HERR OBERLEUTNANT.

RIGHT. WE SHALL EXAMINE EACH VEHICLE!



STEALTHILY STANTON SLID FROM THE TRUCK. THE SOFT LAYER OF SAND MUFFLED HIS FOOTSTEPS AS HE DASHED FOR THE ONLY POSSIBLE COVER . . .



ANOTHER VEHICLE JOINED THE QUEUE AT THE CHECK POINT. STANTON, A FLUENT GERMAN-SPEAKER, SAT IN AMAZEMENT AS HE OVERHEARD A DISCUSSION OF A TOP GERMAN SECRET...

WE HAVE NINE DAYS TO PREPARE FOR THE FUHRER'S VISIT. WHERE SHOULD THE MEETING TAKE PLACE?

I SUGGEST THE FIELD MARSHAL'S H.Q. AT SIDI-RAZLAT.



SLOWLY, STANTON GROUND OUT HIS CIGARETTE AS HE CAME TO THE END OF HIS STORY . . .

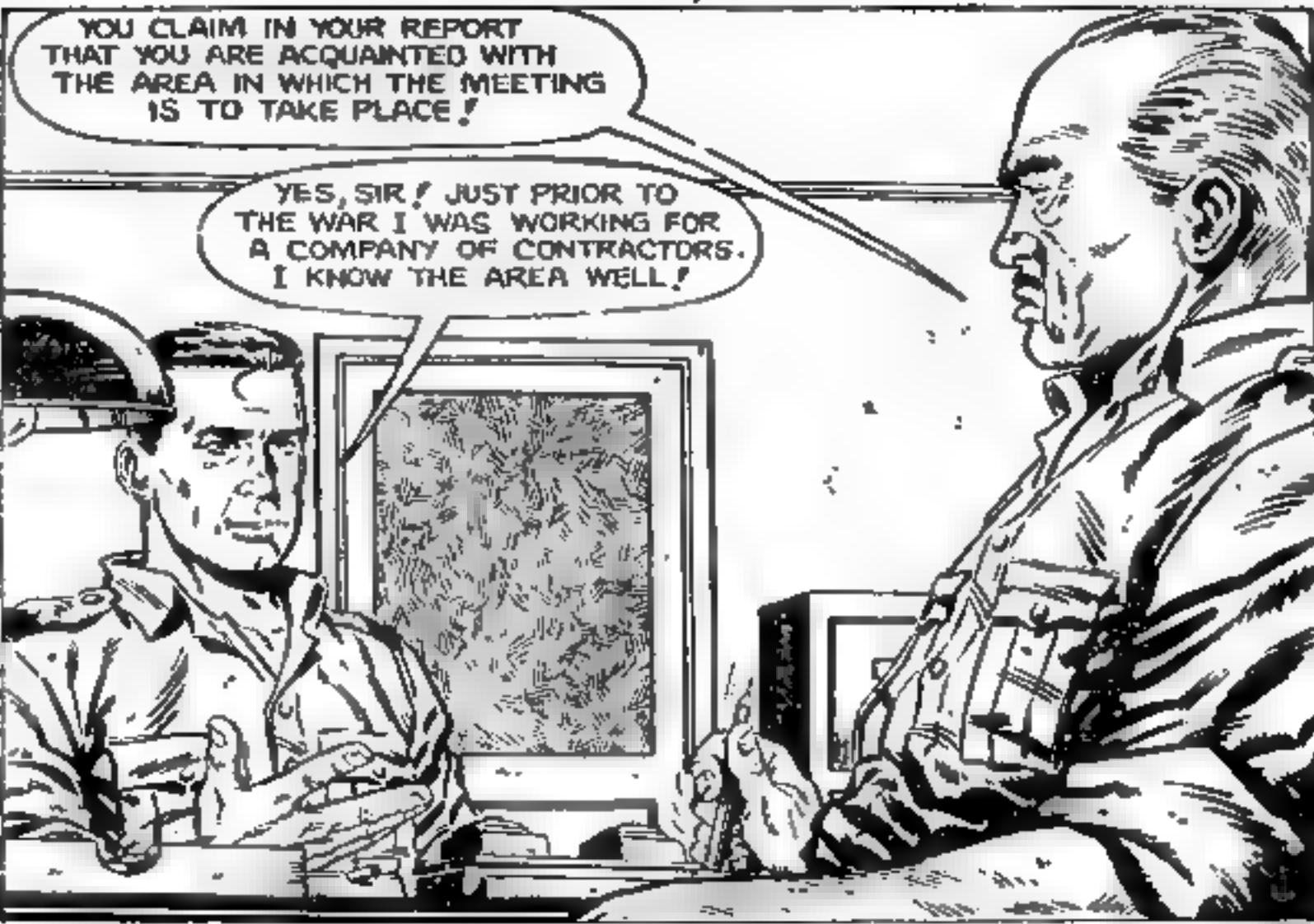
WELL, SIR, THE REST YOU KNOW. I SLIPPED AWAY AND WAS FOUND HALF DEAD BY A DESERT PATROL WHO BROUGHT ME IN.

I SEE!



YOU CLAIM IN YOUR REPORT
THAT YOU ARE ACQUAINTED WITH
THE AREA IN WHICH THE MEETING
IS TO TAKE PLACE!

YES, SIR! JUST PRIOR TO
THE WAR I WAS WORKING FOR
A COMPANY OF CONTRACTORS.
I KNOW THE AREA WELL!



IF A RAID
IS ORGANISED ON
SIDI-RAZLAT, STANTON,
WILL YOU ACT AS
GUIDE?

I'D BE GLAD TO, SIR.
I HAVE A SCORE TO
SETTLE FOR MY
REGIMENT!



Chapter 2. Stormy Handling

ALONE IN HIS OFFICE, COLONEL BRAYBROOKE ANALYSED THE HAZARDS OF SUCH AN OPERATION. THE CHOICE OF A COMMANDER WOULD BE ONE OF THE MOST IMPORTANT FACTORS . . .

WE NEED TO STRIKE ACCURATELY—AND FAST! JEFFCOTT'S THE STEADY, COOL-HEADED TYPE WE NEED FOR THIS JOB. HIM AND MCGILL . . .



LATER THAT DAY, TWO COMMANDO OFFICERS, MAJOR JEFFCOTT AND CAPTAIN MCGILL, TOGETHER WITH CAPTAIN STANTON WERE GATHERED ROUND BRAYBROOKE'S DESK . . .

THE SUCCESS OF THIS VENTURE COULD BRING GERMANY TO HER KNEES! THAT'S WHY EACH MAN MUST BE HAND-PICKED!



IF IT GIVES US A CHANCE TO POLISH OFF A FEW JERRIES, I'LL BE HAPPY.

MCGILL'S FANATICAL HATRED OF THE GERMANS WAS LEGENDARY IN HIS UNIT.

The Unexpected

NOT ONE OF THE COMMANDOS KNEW THEIR DESTINATION, BUT IN THE FOLLOWING WEEKS OF TRAINING IN RUBBER DINGHIES, RUMOURS WERE RIFE...

HAVE YOU HEARD, MATE? WE'RE GOING TO BLOW UP A MINEFIELD IN ONE OF THEM NORWEGIAN FJORDS!

OH, ARE WE, PERKINS? I THOUGHT WE WERE GOING TO FIND A DESERT ISLAND WHERE YOU CAN SLEEP IN THE SUN FOR THE DURATION! CUT THE YAPPING AND GET ON WITH THE JOB!



ALTHOUGH THE MEN WERE IN PEAK CONDITION, THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF THEIR MISSION MEANT A RAPID RUN-THROUGH OF THE TECHNIQUES THEY WERE LIKELY TO NEED. STANTON'S QUICK GRASP OF THESE DETAILS DREW APPROVAL FROM EVEN THE MOST HARDENED COMMANDO.



THAT BLOKE
STANTON'S PICKING
THINGS UP QUICK,
SARGE?

THE MORE HE SAW OF STANTON, THE MORE MAJOR JEFFCOTT LIKED HIM. DURING THE TENSE, UNCERTAIN DAYS BEFORE THEIR EMBARKATION, THE TWO MEN BECAME FIRM FRIENDS . . .

BEFORE THE WAR BROKE OUT, I'D NEVER EVEN HELD A GUN. ELECTRICAL ENGINEERING WAS MY JOB. WHAT WAS YOURS?



I SUPPOSE WAR'S
MY BUSINESS. I'M A
REGULAR. MILITARY
FAMILY BACKGROUND,
SANDBURST . . . THAT
SORT OF THING . . .

SUDDENLY THEY RECEIVED ORDERS TO EMBARK FOR AN UNKNOWN DESTINATION. CAPTAIN MCGILL SUPERVISED THE LOADING OF EQUIPMENT ABOARD A SUBMARINE . . .

ARE YOU LAZY SLOBS
GOING TO TAKE ALL DAY TO GET THOSE
STORES ABOARD?



LAZY SLOBS! —HE'S GOT
A NERVE! THIS BOX
WEIGHS A PERISHIN'
TON!

KEEP YOUR
HAIR ON, SARGE!
MCGILL'S ALWAYS
LIKE THIS BEFORE
AN OP.

SERGEANT WHITE AND SPIDER PERKINS WERE NOT THE ONLY ONES TO FEEL THE STING OF MCGILL'S WHIPLASH TONGUE . . .



PICK UP
YOUR FEET,
KENNEDY!
CAN'T YOU
STAND UP,
MAN?

STONE THE
CROWS! ANYBODY'D
THINK I FELL OVER
FOR THE FUN
OF IT!

The Unexpected

ONCE UNDER WAY, THE LONG SLEEK CRAFT SUBMERGED. THE COMMANDOS HAD TO ACCUSTOM THEMSELVES TO THE CRAMPED, STUFFY WORLD OF THE MEN WHO SPENT THEIR LIVES BENEATH THE SURFACE OF THE SEA.



TWO DAYS OUT MAJOR JEFFCOTT BRIEFED HIS MEN . . .

THIS RAD IS VITAL! HITLER HIMSELF IS MEETING RUMMEL IN SWITZERLAND, HERE. OUR PLAN WILL BE TO . . .

PHEW! WE'RE AIMING HIGH THIS TIME!



IN AN ATMOSPHERE THAT COULD TRY THE NERVES OF THE COOLEST-HEADED VETERAN, CONSTANT BICKERING AND PETTY DIFFERENCES WERE COMMON . . .

LOOK, CAPTAIN MCGILL—THIS WAITING IS TRYING FOR ALL OF US, SO EASE UP ON THE MEN. YOU'RE RIDING THEM TOO HARD!

WHAT DOES HE KNOW? I CAME THROUGH THE RANKS—I UNDERSTAND THE MEN! IT'S NO GOOD BEING TOO SOFT!

BENEATH THE DARK, HOSTILE WAVES, THEY SURGED FORWARD UNTIL THE SUBMARINES WERE ONLY TWO MILES FROM THE CYRENAIC COAST.

WE'RE NEARING YOUR DESTINATION, MAJOR JEFF COTT!

THAT'LL BE A RELIEF TO THE MEN, LIEUTENANT HODGES! THEY'LL LIKE THE IDEA OF BREATHING GOOD FRESH AIR AGAIN!

The Unexpected

SOON THEY WERE CLOSE ENOUGH FOR MAJOR JEFFCOTT TO LOOK AT THE SHORE THROUGH THE PERISCOPE . . .

IT'S REALLY TOO DARK TO SEE PROPERLY, BUT EVERYTHING SEEMS QUIET.

GOOD-O! WE DON'T WANT ANY NAZI SNOOPERS ROUND WHEN WE TAKE A CRACK AT THEIR BOSS!



BUT AS THE SLEEK SHAPES OF THE SUBMARINES EMERGED FROM THE DEPTHS, AND THE MEN PREPARED FOR DISEMBARKATION, AN UNEXPECTED HAZARD CROPPED UP . . .



A WHITE CAPPED SEA ROLLED BACK AND FORTH OVER THE EXPOSED CASINGS, THE WIND SCREAMING ACROSS THEIR STAY-WIRES. THE SEA WAS ROUGH!

AND AS THE FIRST RATING CLIMBED OUT ON TO THE WET,
SLIPPERY PLATES, FURTHER DANGER REVEALED ITSELF...

CAP'N HODGES!
GERMAN E BOAT
COMING UP
FAST!



AS THE TWO SUBMARINES CRASH DIVED
THEY COULD SEE THE E BOAT'S SISTER
SHIP SURGING FORWARD TO ADD THE
WEIGHT OF HER ARMAMENT TO THE
ATTACK.



The Unexpected

TAKING A LAST QUICK LOOK THROUGH THE PERISCOPE AS THEY PLUNGED DOWN INTO THE DEPTHS, LIEUTENANT HODGES SUDDENLY GAVE A GASP OF SURPRISE . . .

WELL, I'LL BE DARNED - THEY'RE TURNING AWAY!

THAT'S ODD! WHAT COULD HAVE MADE THEM CHANGE THEIR MINDS?



AFTER A SHORT WAIT, THEY ROSE AGAIN TO THE SURFACE - HALF EXPECTING TO LOOK STRAIGHT INTO THE CUTTING BOWS OF AN AVENGING E BOAT!

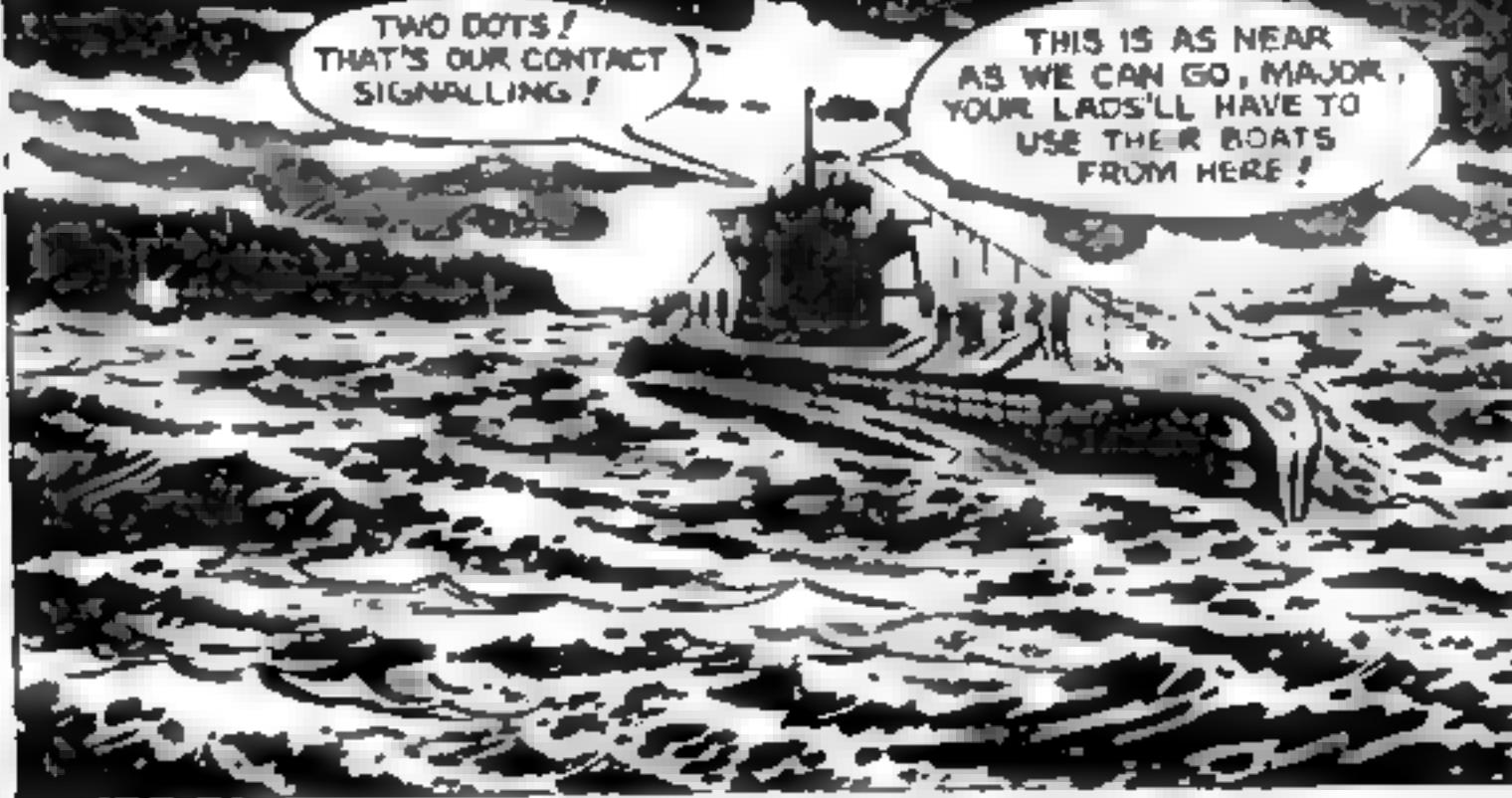
THIS IS A SPOT OF LUCK, MAJOR! THOSE TWO JERRY BOATS COULD HAVE BLOWN US SKY-HIGH!



WITH A BIG SWELL RUNNING, HODGES CAREFULLY CONNED THE SUBMARINES TOWARDS THE BEACH. TWO HUNDRED YARDS FROM THE SHORE THEY WAITED AS A LIGHT WINKED FROM THE CLIFFS . . .

TWO DOTS! THAT'S OUR CONTACT SIGNALLING!

THIS IS AS NEAR AS WE CAN GO, MAJOR. YOUR LADS'LL HAVE TO USE THEIR BOATS FROM HERE!



The Unexpected

25

THE RUGGED SWELLS, PITCHING AND TOSSED
IN THE WIND SWIFT SIDE WERE HARD TO
BOARD . . .

SORRY SIR I SLIPPED
ON THE WET DECK!

COME ON!
GET IN AND STOP
ACTING LIKE A
CLOWN!

PLATOON AND CAPTAIN NEWELL SET
OFF TOWARDS THE BEACH PARTING
FURRY BUT AGAINST AN OFF SHORE
CURRENT AND A RISING WIND.
SUDDENLY A HUGE WAVE HIT THE
DINGHY . . .

WHAT
THE
HELL?

The Unexpected

CORPORAL KENNEDY STRUGGLED TO THE SURFACE AND SPLASHED FORWARD WITH FEEBLE STROKES . . .

I CAN'T . . .
KEEP GOING
MUCH LONGER . . .

ALL RIGHT,
KENNEDY, HANG
ON! I'M
COMING!

EVEN AS THE EXHAUSTED MAN BEGAN TO SINK BELOW THE WAVES, MCGILL'S SWUNG ALA CRASPED HIM FIRMLY. FROM THE SUBMARINE, JEFFCOTT WATCHED . . .

MCGILL AND I DON'T HIT IT OFF ALL THE TIME BUT HE'S GOT NERVE, ALL RIGHT?



LEAVING KENNEDY LYING GASPING ON THE BEACH, MCGILL WALKED UP TO AN OLD ARAB WHO SAT Huddled UP CLUTCHING A SMALL TORCH . . .

ALL IS WELL.
EFFENLY THERE ARE
NO GERMANS ON
THE CLIFF.



I HOPE YOU'RE TELLING
THE TRUTH, YOU OLD BAZZARD!
IF YOU'RE NOT, I'LL WRING
YOUR NECK - PERSONALLY!

The Unexpected

27

AT AT TALL'S SIGNAL THE REST OF THE MEN ON THE S.S. MARINE STRUGGLED TO PREPARE THEIR TORPEDOES. BUT THE ANGRY SEAS KEPT THE DECK PERMANENTLY WET.

RIGHT - JUMP!

COR - IT'S LIKE TRYING TO KEEP YOUR BALANCE ON A CAKE OF SOAP!

ONE BY ONE THE DINGIES WERE LAUNCHED AND SIX LESTFULLY BOARDED. LET'S SAY MR. PERKINS TOOK HIS TURN ...

WATCH IT, SPIDER - THIS IS NO TIME TO PLAY GAMES. HEY, ARE YOU OKAY, MATE?

MUCH!

The Unexpected

AS THE CLUSTER OF TINY BOATS LURCHED UNCERTAINLY TOWARDS THE DARK SHORE, SPIDER WINCING WITH PAIN WAS DRAGGED DRIPPING AND MISERABLE BACK TO THE DECK . . .

YOU'VE BROKEN YOUR ANKLE TOSH? GOT A PAIN IN YOUR CHEST, TOO?

NOT LIKELY - I'M JUST FEELING FOR MY FAG-PAPERS. JUST MY LUCK - THEY'RE ALL DRENCHED!

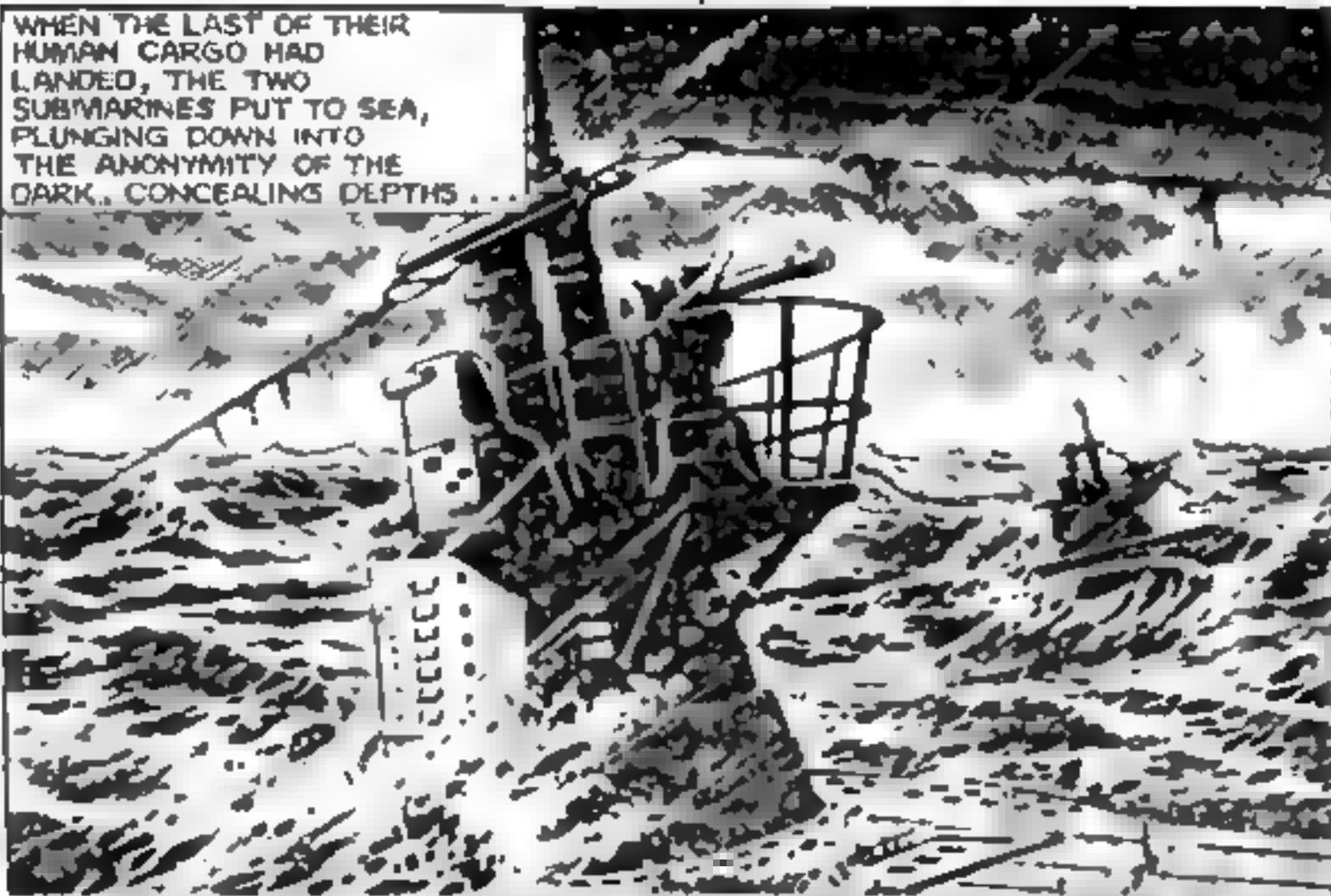


THE FIRST LANDING PARTY DRAGGED THEIR DINGHIES ASHORE, THEN LOOKED BACK AND SAW THEIR COMRADES ON THE SECOND SUBMARINE UNDERGOING THE HAZARDS THEY HAD ENCOUNTERED . . .

I PITY 'EM! OUR TRIP WAS NO HOLIDAY - BUT THE WIND'S RISEN SINCE THEN!



WHEN THE LAST OF THEIR HUMAN CARGO HAD LANDED, THE TWO SUBMARINES PUT TO SEA, PLUNGING DOWN INTO THE ANONYMITY OF THE DARK, CONCEALING DEPTHS . . .



AT HOME JEFFCOTT AND MC GILL STUDIED THE CLIFFS WHICH ROSE STEEPLY FROM THE BEACH, TOWERING HIGH ABOVE THE SEA . . .

WE'RE IN TROUBLE, MAJOR. PINKINS IS OUR CLIMBING EXPERT, AND HE BROKE HIS ANKLE ON THE SUB.

IT LOOKS AS IF IT'S UP TO ME, MC GILL. I'LL GO FIRST.

I'LL TAKE THE SECOND ROPE, MAJOR. I'VE DONE A LOT OF CLIMBING BACK HOME!

Chapter 3. Dangerous Journey

MCGILL FELT IT WAS A BLOW TO HIS PRIDE WHEN STANTON VOLUNTEERED TO SCALE THE CLIFF. BUT IT WAS A TASK THAT MCGILL KNEW WAS BEYOND HIS OWN CAPABILITIES.

CAN YOU MAKE IT STANTON? THIS WON'T BE A HOLIDAY CLIMB!

WHY SHOULDN'T HE MAKE IT? HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE OUR GUIDE - ALL RIGHT, STANTON, GUIDE US UP THAT!

THE TWO CLIMBERS BEGAN TO EDGE THEIR WAY UP THE TORTUOUS CLIFF. MCGILL, IMPATIENT WITH THE DELAY IN THE OPERATION, SWUNG ROUND IRRITABLY ON THE MEN . . .

COME ON, YOU USELESS LOT! GET SOME ROPES ROUND THE EQUIPMENT, READY FOR LIFTING!

The Unexpected

31

THE CLIMB WAS SLOW BUT STEADY UNTIL MAJOR JEFFCOTT SUDDENLY GAVE A SHOUT OF ALARM. HE FELT A FOOT HOLD GIVING WAY BEHIND HIS CLIMMING BOOTS . . .



BUT BEFORE THE MAJOR COULD SECURE A FIRMER GRIP, THE ROCK LEDGE BROKE AWAY — LEAVING HIM HANGING BY HIS FINGERS . . .



The Unexpected

WITH THE HELP OF STANTON'S ENCOURAGEMENT, JEFFCOTT FOUND A TOE-HOLD ON THE SOLID LEDGE ON WHICH HIS COMPANION WAS STANDING.



THE QUIET CONFIDENCE IN STANTON'S VOICE SURPRISED THE MAJOR. THIS MAN WAS MORE THAN A HOLIDAY CLIMBER — HE WAS AN EXPERT!



EXERTING ALL HIS ENERGY,
STANTON JERKED THE
MAJOR TOWARDS HIM ...



YOU'RE FULL OF SURPRISES, CAPTAIN! WHY DIDN'T YOU TELL US YOU WERE A TRAINED ROCK-CLIMBER?

I DIDN'T WANT ANYONE TO THINK I WAS SHOOTING A LINE, MAJOR.

TO JEFFRETT, THE EXCUSE SOUNDED THIN, BUT HE THOUGHT PERHAPS STANTON HAD BECOME SENSITIVE TO CAPTAIN MCGILL'S SARCASTIC MANNER.

THE TWO MEN RESUMED THEIR CLIMB AND MADE GOOD TIME TO THE TOP OF THE CLIFF. A COIL OF ROPE SNAKED OUT TO THE IMPATIENT COMMANDOS WAITING BELOW.

EVEN THE TWO ROPES TIED TOGETHER MAY NOT REACH...

DON'T WORRY, MAJOR. IT WILL BE LONG ENOUGH.

The Unexpected

HEAVY ROPES WERE HAULED UP BY THE LIGHT LINE THE TWO CLIMBERS HAD CARRIED. WHEN THEY WERE SECURED, THE COMMANDOS BEGAN CLAWING THEIR WAY UP THE CLIFF.

SERGEANT WHITE, GET UP TOP AND KEEP THIS LOT MOVING. WE DON'T WANT TO BE HERE ALL NIGHT!



AS THE EXPLOSIVES WERE HAULED UP, A COMMANDO HAD TO 'RIDE' THE LOAD TO HOLD IT AWAY FROM THE ROUGH SURFACE OF THE ROCKS.



IN AN HOUR, THE MEN AND ALL THEIR EQUIPMENT WERE ASSEMBLED AT THE TOP OF THE CLIFF.



The Unexpected

35

THE COMMANDOS
PRESSED FORWARD
STEALTHILY INTO
THE NIGHT . . .

PICK IT UP PROPERLY,
SKINNER. DON'T WANDER
ALONG CUDGELING IT!

MCGILL'S ASKING FOR A
PUNCH UP THE HOOCHER.
HE MAKES ME SICK!

MCGILL'S BARK'S
WORSE THAN HIS
BITE, LADDIE, AND
HE'S A GOOD
FIGHTING
MAN . . .

DAWN SHOULD BE UP IN
HALF-AN-HOUR, MAJOR. BUT
WE SHOULD HAVE REACHED
THE VARD BY THEN.

GOOD! IT'LL GIVE THE
MEN A CHANCE TO
REST.



The Unexpected

THE FIRST SIGNS OF APPROACHING DAY WERE CUTTING THE DARK SKY AS THEY ARRIVED AT THE DRIED UP RIVER BED . . .

TEST IT FOR MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS — BUT I DOUBT IF ANYONE'S BEEN NEAR THIS PLACE FOR YEARS.

RIGHT! I'LL START CHECKING THE REAR, IF YOU LIKE!



WITH TWO MEN POSTED ON GUARD, THE REST SPREAD OUT TO FIND NOOKS AND CRANNIES WHERE THEY COULD SLEEP THE DAYLIGHT HOURS AWAY IN PEACE . . .

WHAT'S THE MATTER, CHUM, DON'T YOU LIKE MUSIC?

IF HITLER HAD HEARD YOU PLAY THAT SECRET WEAPON YOU CALL A MOUTH ORGAN, HE'D HAVE JAGGED IT IN YEARS AGO, SARGE!



The Unexpected

57

THE BRIGHT BURNING BALL OF THE SUN CLIMBED HIGH OVERHEAD, BEATING DOWN FEROCIOUSLY ON THE WADI. THE COMMANDOS SHIFTED RESTLESSLY IN THEIR SLEEP...

WAKE UP, STANTON !
THERE'S A PLANE
COMING. DON'T
KNOW IF IT'S A
JERRY...

WHAT ?
EH ? WHERE
IS IT ?



AS THE OUTLINES OF THE PLANE BECAME MORE DISTINCT, BOTH MEN IDENTIFIED IT ...

IT'S A
JERRY
SPOTTER !

I DON'T
THINK HE'S
SEEN US, MAJOR.
HE HASN'T ALTERED
HIS COURSE.



The Unexpected

NOTHING MORE WAS SEEN OF THE AIRCRAFT, AND AS THE EVENING DREW NEAR, THE MEN CHECKED THEIR WEAPONS AND BEGAN PREPARING FOR THE CRITICAL TASK AHEAD.



AS NIGHT FELL, MCGILL AND A FEW PICKED MEN MADE READY TO LEAVE . . .

GOOD LUCK, MCGILL. WE'LL GIVE YOU TWENTY-FIVE MINUTES TO BLOW UP THE GENERATING STATION AND MEET US.

WE'LL DO IT, SIR!



The Unexpected

59

NEW THEY WERE
ALMOST READY
TO BEGIN THE
MOST PERILOUS
AND DIFFICULT
TASK OF THEIR
SERVICE
CAREERS . . .

NOT LONG
TO GO NOW, BILL—
NERVOUS?

YOU'RE JOKING!
I RECKON CAPTAIN
STANTON WILL SEE WE
GET THROUGH THIS
ALL RIGHT!



IN THE
DARKNESS
BEYOND,
MCGILL'S
PARTY HAD
MADE FAIR
PROGRESS

SERGEANT WHITE — CREATE A
DIVERSION! GIVE ME A CHANCE TO
GET BEHIND THAT SENTRY.

OKAY SIR!
IT'S IN THE
BAG!



The Unexpected

SOUNDLESSLY, MCGILL'S GROUP BEGAN TO SPREAD OUT . . .



SNOWY WHITE LOBBED A STONE INTO THE BUSHES. THE RUSE WORKED. THE GERMAN SENTRY STEPPED AWAY FROM THE BUILDING TO INVESTIGATE. MCGILL FLATTENED HIMSELF SOUNDLESSLY AGAINST THE WALL'S CONCEALING BLACKNESS . . .



NEXT SECOND, MCGILL HAD THE SENTRY IN AN IRON GRIP.

ALL RIGHT, YOU BLOKES! THE CAPTAIN'S DONE HIS PART. LET'S GET MOVING.

ARGH...



THE REST OF THE PARTY MADE A DASH FOR THE DOOR OF THE GENERATING PLANT. MCGILL STOOD DEFILANTLY BY THE DOOR, READY TO INTERCEPT ANY UNWANTED VISITORS . . .

THAT'S FUNNY—I THOUGHT THIS WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN BUILT BY STANTON'S FIRM . . . AN ENGLISH COMPANY . . .

GIVE US THREE MINUTES, S.R. THIS LOOKS LIKE BEING AN EASY JOB.

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The Unexpected

WITHIN RECORD TIME,
THE OTHERS HAD
COMPLETED THEIR TASK.
TOGETHER THEY MADE
BACK INTO THE
DARKNESS, SNOWY
JOINING THE WIRE
LEADS TO THE
DETONATING BOX.

OKAY—
NOW!

WELL DONE,
SARGE / THAT'S
A MEAT BIT
OF WORK!



THEIR MISSION SUCCESSFUL,
THEY PACKED THEIR
EQUIPMENT AND SET OFF...

IF THE REST OF THE
RAID GOES AS SMOOTHLY
AS THAT, WE'LL BE
SITTING PRETTY!

AND WE'RE
TEN MINUTES
AHEAD OF
SCHEDULE



The Unexpected

13

THEY ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS BEFORE MAJOR JEFFCOTT'S MAIN PARTY. BUT SOON THE OTHERS CAME ON THE SCENE . . .



FOR SOME REASON, STANTON SEEMED SURPRISED
AT MCGILL'S METHOD OF DEALING WITH THE GERMAN . . .

MORE CONFIDENT NOW, THE COMMANDOS TURNED
ONCE MORE TO THE REAL TASK AHEAD OF THEM.
HARDENED BY MONTHS OF RIGID TRAINING, THEY
MADE GOOD TIME TO SIDI RAZLAT. SUDDENLY . . .

STONE THE CROWS —
IT'S A DOG! LET'S
HOPE ITS OWNER
DOESN'T COME OUT
TO INVESTIGATE!



The Unexpected

BUT IT SEEMED
LUCK WAS AGAINST
THEM . . .

I COULD PICK HIM
OFF LIKE A CLAY-
PIGEON, SIR! HOW
ABOUT IT?

NO, MCGILL!
DON'T SHOOT! HE
MAY NOT HAVE
SEEN US.



WITH A SIGN OF EXASPERATION, THE ARAB TURNED HIS BACK ON THE SKINNY, CRINGING ANIMAL AND SLOUCHED BACK INTO THE HOUSE.

ACCURSED
CREATURE? ALLAH
ONLY KNOWS WHY
I KEEP HIM . . .



THEIR RUBBER-SOLED COMMANDO BOOTS MADE LITTLE NOISE ON THE SANDY ROAD AS THEY MOVED STEALTHILY THROUGH THE NIGHT. AFTER SOME TIME, THEY REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF A SCATTERED NATIVE VILLAGE.

THIS IS ANTEOABIA, A
NATIVE VILLAGE! IT
SHOULD BE DESERTED
AT THIS TIME OF
NIGHT.

PASS THE
WORD DOWN TO
THE MEN TO BE AS
QUIET AS POSSIBLE
AS WE GO
THROUGH . . .



A CAR-LOAD OF GERMAN OFFICERS, RETURNING LATE FROM A NIGHT'S REVELRY, WOULD NOT HAVE BEEN SO CAREFREE HAD THEY KNOWN HOW CLOSE THEY WERE TO THEIR ENEMY...

THERE'S A CAR COMING THIS WAY, SIR!



MCGILL'S FINGER ITCHED ON THE TRIGGER AS THE CAR'S BLAZING HEADLIGHTS ILLUMINATED THE SQUALID ARAB DWELLINGS...

LONG LIVE THE FATHERLAND - AND DEATH TO OUR ENEMIES!

THEY MUST BE PRETTY SURE OF THEMSELVES TO DRIVE AROUND WITH HEADLIGHTS ON

WITHOUT FURTHER MISHAP, THEY CAME IN SIGHT OF THEIR DESTINATION - ROMMEL'S H.Q. AT SIDI RAZLAT, DEEP IN THE GREEN BELT OF CYRENAICA.

WHERE IS THE ENTRANCE? I CAN'T SEE ONE FROM HERE.

THE BUILDING IS IN THE FORM OF A SQUARE WITH AN INNER COURTYARD. THE ONLY ENTRANCE IS THROUGH THE ARCHWAY ON THE OTHER SIDE!

Chapter 4. *The Jaws Close*

IN HUSHED TONES THEY DISCUSSED THE PLAN OF ACTION . . .

THERE'S A GATE WAY THROUGH THE WIRE OPPOSITE THE COURTYARD!

THAT WILL BE GUARDED. WE'D BETTER CUT THROUGH THE WIRE HERE AND TAKE THE GUARDS FROM THE REAR!



NO GERMANS WERE IN SIGHT AND ONLY THE COILED BARBED WIRE FENCE GAVE ANY INDICATION OF THE WARTIME USE OF THE BUILDING.

SERGEANT, TAKE A COUPLE OF MEN AND CUT A GAP THROUGH THE WIRE. WE'LL COVER YOU!

CONWAY AND OSBORNE,
GET YOUR CUTTERS OUT
AND FOLLOW ME
NO NOISE!



BUT SOMETHING WAS WORRYING MCGILL. IT WAS BEGINNING TO SEEM TO HIM THAT THE WHOLE OPERATION WAS WORKING OUT TOO EASILY.

IT'S QUIET! TOO QUIET! I DON'T LIKE IT!

WE'RE A LONG WAY FROM THE FRONT LINE HERE. THEY PROBABLY THINK THEY DON'T NEED A HEAVY GUARD!



AT A SIGNAL FROM THE SERGEANT, THE COMMANDOS MOVED QUICKLY THROUGH THE GAP THEY HAD CUT IN THE WIRE, AND GROUPED IN THE SHADOWS OF THE BUILDING.

I CAN SEE THE GATE AND A SMALL GUARD HOUSE.

I'LL TAKE CARE OF THE GUARD, MAJOR!



The Unexpected

IGNORING STANTON'S PROTESTS, THE THREE MEN FLITTED THROUGH THE SHADOWS TOWARDS THE GATE.

THERE'S NOBODY ABOUT AT ALL, SIR!

I DON'T GET IT! IF THE BIG CHEESE WAS HERE, THIS PLACE SHOULD BE FULL WITH JERRIES!

I'VE A FEELING SOMETHING IS GOING TO BREAK, SOON, SO STAY ON YOUR TOES. CORPORAL, OPEN THAT GATE — WE MAY WANT TO GET OUT IN A HURRY!

MCGILL'S FIGHTING INSTINCT TOLD HIM THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG, AND SOMEHOW HE FELT THAT STANTON, WHOM HE HAD NEVER LIKED, WAS RESPONSIBLE.

THE PLACE IS DESERTED, MAJOR! I'M BEGINNING TO THINK SOMEONE HAS GOT HIS FACTS MIXED ON THIS TRIP.

THIS IS THE PLACE I TELL YOU!

STANTON! YOU SEEM TO KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND. YOU LEAD THE WAY!



The Unexpected

49

CAUTIOUSLY, CAPTAIN STANTON, MADE HIS WAY INTO THE COURTYARD, HIS GUN READY FOR ACTION . . .

IT'S ALL
CLEAR - COME
QUICKLY!

I'VE GOT A
FEELING THERE'S
SOME TROUBLE GOING
ON, MAJOR . . .

WHILE I'M
RUNNING THE SHOW
WE CARRY OUT
ORDERS, MCGILL.

STANDING TO ONE SIDE, CAPTAIN STANTON WATCHED AS THE COMMANDOS
CREPT SILENTLY INTO THE WALLED COURTYARD, THEN FOLLOWED THEM INTO
THE SHADOWS .

IT'S DARK
IN HERE. CAN'T
SEE A THING!
I DON'T LIKE IT!

WHERE'S STANTON?
HE KNOWS THE WAY
INTO THE BUILDING.

SUDDENLY, A SHARP ORDER IN GERMAN BROKE THE SILENCE. INSTANTLY THE BRITISH SOLDIERS WERE BLINDED BY POWERFUL LIGHTS . . .

IT'S BLINDING!
I CAN'T SEE ANYTHING!

WHAT
THE
HECK . . .



AS THE COMMANDOS' EYES BECAME ACCUSTOMED TO THE LIGHT, THEY FOUND THEY HAD WALKED RIGHT INTO A NEATLY LAID TRAP!

TELL YOUR MEN TO LAY DOWN THEIR ARMS, MAJOR! ANY FALSE HEROICS WILL ONLY CAUSE UNNECESSARY BLOODESHED!

PERISHIN' NAZIS! I'LL TAKE SOME OF 'EM WITH ME BEFORE I LAY MY GUN DOWN!

WELL,
I'LL BE . . .



The Unexpected

51

A FAMILIAR VOICE BEHIND THEM BROUGHT THEM SWINGING ROUND ON THEIR HEELS . . .

YOU'D BETTER DO AS YOU'RE TOLD, MAJOR JEFFCOTT - OUR TROOPS HAVE ORDERS TO FIRE IF YOU SHOW ANY SIGN OF RESISTANCE !

SO YOU'RE ONE OF THEM, STANTON ! I'VE NEVER TRUSTED YOU FROM THE BEGINNING . . .

CORPORAL KENNEDY STARED AT STANTON UNBELIEVINGLY . . . THIS WAS THE MAN HE HAD REGARDED AS A HERO - A NAZI SPY !

THAT TWO-FACED PERISHER STANTON ! I'LL FIX HIM !

EASY WITH THAT GRENADE, CORP. DON'T LET THE JERRIES SEE IT . . .

The Unexpected

SLOWLY THE CORPORAL EASED THE GRENADE BEHIND HIS BACK, WHILE THE SERGEANT LEANED FORWARD TO JERK OUT THE PIN.



WITH THE CAPTURE OF ALL THE COMMANDOS, THE GERMANS WERE TO PUT INTO OPERATION THE LAST PART OF THEIR PLAN . . . THE DESTRUCTION OF THE TWO SUBMARINES WHICH WERE TO PICK UP THE COMMANDOS . . .



ANY ILLUSIONS THE HAPLESS MEN MAY HAVE HAD WERE QUICKLY DESTROYED BY THE JEERS OF THE MAN THEY HAD KNOWN AS STANTON.

SO MUCH FOR THE UNBEATABLE BRITISH COMMANDOS! IT HAS AMUSED ME GREATLY, WATCHING YOU ALL GO TO SO MUCH TROUBLE OVER A NON EXISTENT MEETING!



THERE WAS ONE QUESTION THAT WAS PUZZLING MAJOR JEFFCOTT...

WHY DID YOU SAVE MY LIFE BACK ON THAT CLIFF, IF YOU INTENDED TO LEAD US INTO THIS TRAP? AT LEAST THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN ONE DEATH NOT ON YOUR CONSCIENCE!

THAT IS SIMPLE, MAJOR — I WILL EXPLAIN ...



YOUR DEATH WOULD HAVE BEEN UNIMPORTANT IN ITSELF, BUT WE WANTED ALL OF YOU. WITHOUT A LEADER, THE WHOLE RAID MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABANDONED.

TO THINK I LOOKED UPON YOU AS A PERSONAL FRIEND...



IN ONE LIGHTNING MOVEMENT, KENNEDY DREW BACK HIS ARMY - AND HURLED THE GRENADE WITH EVERY OUNCE OF HIS STRENGTH AT THE SEARCHLIGHT'S TAUNTING BEAM . . .

DOWN
EVERYBODY!

HUMMEL!
A GRENADE!



VIO暴 GUNFIRE RAKED THE COURTYARD AS THE GRENADE BLEW THE SEARING SEARCHLIGHT TO BITS, PLUNGING EVERYTHING INTO DARKNESS . . .

HUMMEL!
I CANNOT SEE THE ENGLANDERS . . .

AH . . .

NICE WORK,
MATE! THAT'LL EVEN THINGS UP A BIT!



... WITH THE
ONE THAT
MOVING SWIFTLY OUT OF
THE COURTYARD . . .

ON THE OTHER
TWO GUARDS
WERE NOT AWARE
OF THE MAN AS EASY
AS THAT!



WE MUST CHARGE
THEM. IF REINFORCEMENTS
ARE BROUGHT IN, WE'LL HAVE
HAD IT, LYING HERE! HEY!
WHERE'S MCGILL GOING?

The Unexpected

JEFFCOTT
STARED AT THE
RETREATING
FIGURE . . .

McGILL! WHERE D'YOU THINK
YOU'RE GOING? COME BACK
TO YOUR MEN — AT ONCE!
THAT'S AN ORDER!

I'LL TELL YOU
WHERE I'M GOING,
ALL RIGHT . . .

IN A VOICE THAT RASPED
IT'S SCORN, MCGILL SPAT
OUT THE REAL REASON FOR
HIS APPARENT DESERTION . . .

STANTON KNOWS WHEN AND WHERE OUR
SUSPS ARE PICKING US UP. I'VE GOT TO STOP
HIM GOING TO THEIR HEADQUARTERS . . .
BESIDES, HE DOUBLE CROSSED US.

MCGILL'S
RIGHT! IF JERRY
GETS TO KNOW,
NONE OF US
WILL GET AWAY
ALIVE.

The Unexpected

BUT WITHOUT FURTHER AGREEMENT,
THE YALI HAD SLIPPED OUT UNDER THE
ASHURN AND WAS SWALLOWED UP IN
THE DARK BEYOND . . .

I'M AFRAID
SERGEANT WHITE'S
IN IT SICK . . .
WHO WOULD TWO
MANAGED?

WHAT
DO WHAT WE
CAN & LET THE
SAY IT IS
REMARKABLE



FOR THE MOMENT THE COMMANDERS HELD THE OTHER
HAND - BUT IT COULD ONLY BE A MATTER OF TIME
BEFORE FRENCH GERMAN TEAMS ARRIVED. THEN IT
WOULD BE A DIFFERENT STORY . . .

OKAY, MEN - LET'S
SORT 'EM OUT!



RELIEVED BY THE FACT THAT THE LAST DESTINATE
REMENTS OF HADIS WERE BURNT.

The Unexpected

OUT IN THE VILLAGE
MCGILL PEERED CAUTIOUSLY
FROM THE DOORWAY
OF AN OLD ARAB DWELLING . . .

ENJOY YOUR
WALK, STANTON—
IT'S THE LAST YOU'LL
EVER HAVE!

BUT EVEN AS HE PLANNED STANTON'S
DEATH, HIS OWN LIFE HUNG PRECARIOUSLY
IN THE BALANCE . . .

PURE CHANCE DREW MCGILL'S HEAD BACK INTO THE SHADOWS
AS THE GERMAN SNIPER'S BULLET CUT STRAIGHT AND TRUE
INTO THE WALL OF THE HOUSE, NOT SIX INCHES FROM HIS FACE!

THAT WAS
TOO CLOSE FOR
COMFORT! SNIPER
—AH, I SEE YOUR
HIDEOUT.

MCGILL WAS AS QUICK AS A PANTHER. HE LEAPED ACROSS THE SPACE BETWEEN THE TWO HOUSES AND SEIZED THE ASTONISHED GERMAN BEFORE HE HAD A CHANCE TO FIRE AGAIN...

YOU WON'T BE NEEDING THAT RIFLE, FRITZ.

NO...NO...

SNATCHING THE GERMAN'S RIFLE, MCGILL PURSUED HIS PREY DOWN THE STREET, HIS EYES COLD STEEL IN A GRIM, MERCILESS FACE...

OBERLEUTNANT STANTON! YOU'VE BETRAYED US, WEARING A BRITISH UNIFORM. NOW I'LL GIVE YOU DEATH FROM A GERMAN BULLET!

NO, WAIT,
MCGILL—I'LL HELP
YOU, JUST GIVE ME
A CHANCE TO
...AAGH!

The Unexpected

THERE WAS NO PITY IN MCGILL'S FACE AS HE GAZED DOWN AT THE MAN THEY HAD ONCE TRUSTED — AND WHO HAD LED THEM WITHOUT CONSCIENCE INTO THE VERY JAWS OF DEATH.

KILLING ME CAN'T SAVE YOUR PRECIOUS MEN NOW, MCGILL . . . I STILL WIN . . .

THAT'S WHERE YOU'RE WRONG!
THE MEN YOU BETRAYED ARE
JUST MOPPING UP YOUR GLORIOUS
JERRY TROOPS! YOU'RE A
FAILURE, STANTON!



CARRYING THEIR WOUNDED, THE COMMANDO SURVIVORS RETREATED THROUGH THE VILLAGE STREETS, UNDER COVER OF A CURTAIN OF BLAZING LEAD . . .

OKAY, LAOS, LET'S GO . . . THIS DUMP'S GOING TO BE UNHEALTHY SOON . . .



The Unexpected

61

FALLING BACK UNDER THE VIOLENT RAGING STREAM OF FIRE FROM THE COMMANDO REARGUARD, A WOUNDED NAZI OFFICER, HIS EYES BLAZING WITH PAIN AND FURY, TRIED TO RE-ORGANIZE HIS DEPLETED FORCE . . .

BUT THERE ARE NO FIGHTING MEN LEFT IN HEADQUARTERS, SIR!

THEN GIVE THE GUNS TO CLERKS, COOKS - ANY BODY, YOU DOLT! THE ENGLANDERS MUST NOT ESCAPE!

DESTRATION LENT SPEED TO JEFFCOTT'S MEN. GRADUALLY, THE GAP BETWEEN THE RETREATING COMMANDOS AND THEIR PURSUERS WIDENED . . .

WE'LL BE IN TROUBLE IF THE JERRIES REACH THE BEACH BEFORE WE DO, SIR - WE'LL BE CUT OFF!

I KILLED STANTON BEFORE HE COULD TELL THEM WHERE OUR RENDEZVOUS WAS TO TAKE PLACE! IF WE CAN LOSE THE JERRIES IN THE DARK - WE'LL BE OKEY!

The Unexpected

KEEPING UP THEIR SWIFT PACE THEY SOON ARRIVED AT THE RENDEZVOUS. SPOTTING THE DARK SILHOUETTES OF THE TWO SUBMARINES THEY FLASHED THE SIGNAL, AND SHORTLY THE DINGHIS WERE ON THEIR WAY.



THE JOURNEY PASSED UNEVENTFULLY AND IN DUE TIME THE SURVIVORS OF THE PARTY LANDED AT THEIR BASE IN EGYPT.



The Unexpected

63

TWO DAYS AFTER THE RAID, COLONEL BRAYBROOKE LISTENED CAREFULLY TO THE FULL REPORT OF THE OPERATION . . .

I CAN'T SEE WHAT THE GERMANS HOPED TO GAIN FROM THIS!

THREE THINGS, MCGILL! FIRST - TO STUDY OUR METHODS OF COMMANDO TRAINING; SECOND - TO CAPTURE THE CREAM OF OUR FORCE; AND THIRD - THE DESTRUCTION OF TWO BRITISH SUBMARINES!



AS EACH POINT EMERGED, IT REVEALED MORE CLEARLY THE THOROUGHNESS WITH WHICH THE GERMANS HAD LAID THEIR PLANS. TIMING HAD BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR . . .

HOW COULD THE GERMAN INTELLIGENCE BE SURE THAT THEIR MAN WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY US?

THEY TOOK THE IDENTITY OF A SOUTH AFRICAN CAPTAIN KILLED AT TOBRUK! THEY KNEW WE COULDN'T CHECK BECAUSE THE WHOLE REGIMENT WAS WIPE OUT!



THE COMMANDOS WERE A YOUNG FORCE. BUT FROM OPERATION TASKMASTER THEY HAD LEARNED ONE THING... THEY MUST BE BACKED UP BY METICULOUS INTELLIGENCE.



FROM THOSE EARLY BEGINNINGS THE COMMANDOS WERE FORGED INTO A SUPERB FORCE OF FIGHTING MEN THAT HIT THE ENEMY MANY STUNNING BLOWS THROUGHOUT THE REST OF THE WAR . . .

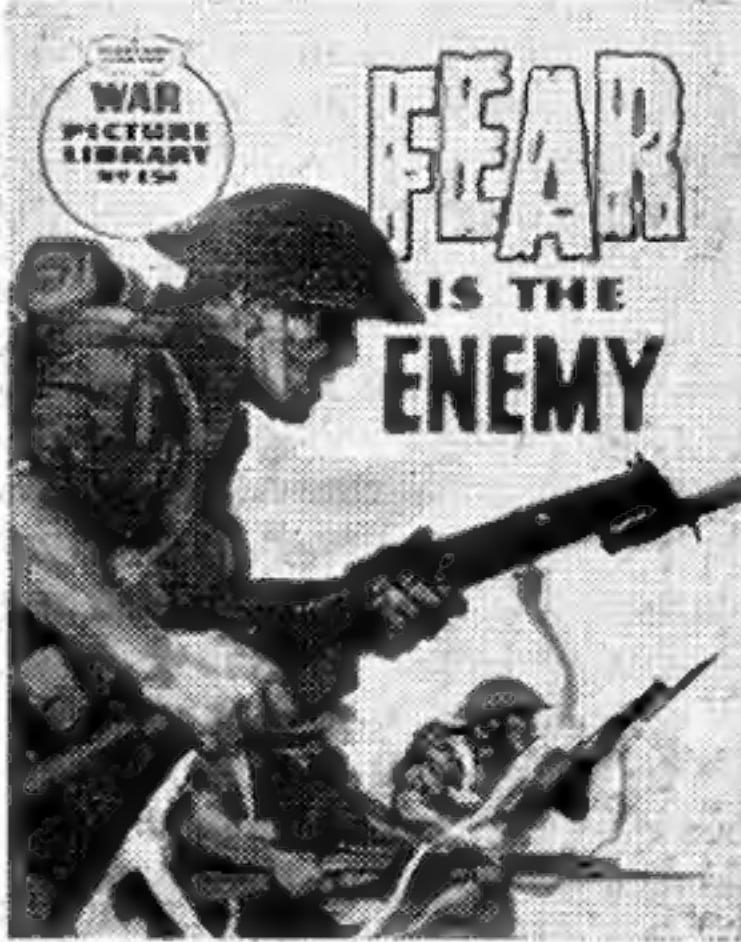
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